

THE DECLARATION OF HAVANA



INTRODUCTION

The Declaration of Havana is the reply of the people of Cuba and of the exploited millions of Latin America to the Declaration of San José, signed on August 28, 1960 by the foreign ministers of the governments belonging to the Organization of American States which participated in the Seventh Conference of Consultation of Foreign Ministers, held at San José, Costa Rica.

The approval of the Declaration of San José found the representatives of Latin American governments backing the United States in its dispute with Cuba over her determination to assure the success of her resolve to achieve her total economic and political independence from the domination of American interests.

But if the United States had succeeded in marshaling the votes of the representatives of Latin American governments against Cuba through the enticement of loans and other pressures, this did not mean that the support of the people of Latin America was assured.

In the words of Cuba's Foreign Minister, Raúl Roa, uttered as he abandoned the conference after the voting, "I am going with my people and with me go all the people of Latin America."

The Declaration of Havana was drafted by Dr. Fidel Castro and approved on September 2, 1960 by more than a million Cubans who constituted themselves into the National General Assembly of the People.

"They married us to falsehood and we were forced to live with it. That's why it seems the earth is sinking when we hear the truth... As if it weren't better to see the earth sink than to live with falsehood."

FIDEL CASTRO

THE DECLARATION OF HAVANA

Close to the monument and to the memory of José Martí in Cuba, free territory of America, the people, in the full exercise of the inalienable powers that proceed from the true exercise of the sovereignty expressed in the direct, universal and public suffrage, has constituted itself into a National General Assembly.

Acting on its own behalf and echoing the true sentiments of the people of our America, the National General Assembly of the People of Cuba:

1. Condemns in all its terms the so-called "Declaration of San José," a document dictated by North American imperialism that is detrimental to the national self-determination, the sovereignty and the dignity of the sister nations of the Continent.

2. The National General Assembly of the People of Cuba energetically condemns the overt and criminal intervention exerted by North American imperialism for more than a century over all the nations of Latin America, which have seen their lands invaded more than once in Mexico, Nicaragua, Haiti, Santo Domingo and Cuba;

have lost, through the voracity of Yankee imperialism, huge and rich areas, whole countries, such as Puerto Rico, which has been converted into an occupied territory; and have suffered, moreover, the outrageous treatment dealt by the Marines to our wives and daughters, as well as to the most exalted symbols of our history, such as the statue of José Martí.¹

This intervention, based upon military superiority, inequitable treaties and the miserable submission of treacherous rulers throughout one hundred years has converted our America—the America that Bolívar, Hidalgo, Juárez, San Martín, O'Higgins, Sucre and Martí wanted free—into an area of exploitation, the backyard of the political and financial Yankee empire, a reserve of votes for the international organization in which the Latin America countries have figured only as the herds driven by the "restless and brutal North that despises us."

The National General Assembly of the People declares that the acceptance by the governments that officially represent the countries of Latin America of that continued and historically irrefutable intervention betrays the ideals of independence of its peoples, negates its sovereignty and prevents true solidarity among our nations, all of which obliges this assembly to repudiate

1. On March 12, 1949, three crew members from the U. S. Navy ships visiting Havana urinated on the monument of José Martí, Cuba's most venerated patriot.

it in the name of the people of Cuba, with a voice that echoes the hope and determination of the Latin American people and the liberating accent of the immortal patriots of our America.

3. The National General Assembly of the People of Cuba rejects likewise the intention of preserving the Monroe Doctrine, used until now, as foreseen by José Martí, "to extend the dominance in America" of the voracious imperialists, to better inject the poison also denounced in his time by José Martí, "the poison of the loans, the canals, the railroads...."

Therefore, in the presence of a hypocritical Pan-Americanism which is only the dominance of Yankee monopolies over the interests of our people and Yankee manipulation of governments prostrated before Washington, the Assembly of the People of Cuba proclaims the liberating Latin-Americanism that throbs in Martí and Benito Juárez. And, upon extending its friendship to the North American people—a country where Negroes are lynched, intellectuals are persecuted and workers are forced to accept the leadership of gangsters—reaffirms its will to march "with all the world and not with just a part of it."

4. The National General Assembly of the People declares that the help spontaneously offered by the Soviet Union to Cuba in the event our country is attacked by

the military forces of the imperialists could never be considered as an act of intrusion, but that it constitutes an evident act of solidarity, and that such help, offered to Cuba in the face of an imminent attack by the Pentagon, honors the Government of the Soviet Union that offered it, as much as the cowardly and criminal aggressions against Cuba dishonor the Government of the United States.

Therefore, the General Assembly of the People declares, before America and before the world, that it accepts and is grateful for the support of the Soviet Union's rockets, should its territory be invaded by military forces of the United States.

5. The National General Assembly of the People of Cuba categorically denies the existence of any intent whatsoever on the part of the Soviet Union and the Chinese People's Republic to "use Cuba's political and social situation. . . to break the continental unity and endanger the unity of the hemisphere." From the first to the last shot, from the first to the last of the twenty thousand martyrs who died in the struggles to overthrow the tyranny and win revolutionary control, from the first to the last revolutionary law, from the first to the last act of the Revolution, the people of Cuba has acted with free and absolute self-determination, and therefore, the Soviet Union or the Chinese People's Republic can never be blamed for the existence of a Revolution which

is Cuba's firm reply to the crimes and wrongs perpetrated by imperialism in America.

On the contrary, the National General Assembly of the People of Cuba maintains that the policy of isolation and hostility toward the Soviet Union and the Chinese People's Republic, promoted and imposed by the United States Government upon the governments of Latin America, and the belligerent and aggressive conduct of the North American Government, as well as its systematic opposition to the acceptance of the Chinese People's Republic as a member of the United Nations, despite the fact that it represents almost the total population of a country of over six hundred million inhabitants, endanger the peace and security of the hemisphere and the world.

Therefore, the National General Assembly of the People of Cuba ratifies its policy of friendship with all the peoples of the world, reaffirms its purpose of establishing diplomatic relations with all the Socialist countries and, from this moment, in the full exercise of its sovereignty and free will, expresses to the Government of the Chinese People's Republic that it agrees to establish diplomatic relations between both countries, and that, therefore, the relations that Cuba has maintained until now with the puppet regime, which is supported in Formosa by the vessels of the Seventh Fleet, are hereby rescinded.

6. The National General Assembly of the People

reaffirms—and is certain of doing so as an expression of a view common to all the people of Latin America—that democracy is incompatible with the financial oligarchy, racial discrimination, and the outrages of the Klu Klux Klan, the persecutions that prevented the world from hearing for many years the wonderful voice of Paul Robeson, imprisoned in his own country, and that killed the Rosenbergs, in the face of the protests and the horror of the world and despite the appeal of the rulers of many countries, and of Pope Pius XII, himself.

The National General Assembly of the People of Cuba expresses its conviction that democracy cannot consist only in a vote, which is almost always fictitious and manipulated by big land holders and professional politicians, but in the right of the citizens to decide, as this Assembly of the People is now deciding, its own destiny. Moreover, democracy will only exist in Latin America when its people are really free to choose, when the humble people are not reduced—by hunger, social inequality, illiteracy, and the juridical systems—to the most degrading impotence.

For all the foregoing reasons, the National General Assembly of the People of Cuba:

Condemns the *latifundium*, a source of poverty for the peasants and a backward and inhuman agricultural system; condemns starvation wages and the iniquitous exploitation of human labor by immoral and privileged

interests; condemns illiteracy, the lack of teachers, of schools, of doctors and hospitals, the lack of protection of old age that prevails in Latin America; condemns the inequality and exploitation of women; condemns the discrimination against the Negro and the Indian; condemns the military and political oligarchies that keep our peoples in utter poverty and block their democratic development and the full exercise of their sovereignty; condemns the handing over of our countries' natural resources to the foreign monopolies as a submissive policy that betrays the interests of the peoples; condemns the governments that ignore the feelings of their people and yield to the directives of Washington; condemns the systematic deception of the people by the information media that serve the interests of the oligarchies and the policies of oppressive imperialism; condemns the news monopoly of the Yankee agencies, instruments of the North American trusts and agents of Washington; condemns the repressive laws that prevent workers, peasants, students and intellectuals, which form the great majority of each country, from organizing themselves and fighting for the realization of their social and patriotic aspirations; condemns the monopolies and imperialistic organizations that continuously loot our wealth, exploit our workers and peasants, bleed and keep in backwardness our economies, and submit the

political life of Latin America to the sway of their own designs and interests.

In short, the National General Assembly of the People of Cuba condemns both the exploitation of man by man and the exploitation of under-developed countries by imperialistic finance capital.

Therefore, the National General Assembly of the People of Cuba proclaims before America:

The right of the peasants to the land; the right of the workers to the fruit of their work; the right of children to education; the right of the ill to medical and hospital attention; the right of youth to work; the right of students to free, experimental, and scientific education; the right of Negroes and Indians to "the full dignity of Man;" the right of women to civil, social and political equality; the right of the aged to a secure old age; the right of intellectuals, artists, and scientists to fight, with their works, for a better world; the right of nations to their full sovereignty; the right of nations to turn fortresses into schools, and to arm their workers, their peasants, their students, their intellectuals, the Negro, the Indian, the women, the young and the old, the oppressed and exploited people, so that they may themselves defend their rights and their destinies.

7. The National General Assembly of the People of Cuba proclaims:

The duty of peasants, workers, intellectuals, Negroes,

Indians, young and old, and women, to fight for their economic, political and social rights; the duty of oppressed and exploited nations to fight for their liberation; the duty of each nation to make common cause with all the oppressed, colonized, exploited peoples, regardless of their location in the world or the geographical distance that may separate them. All the peoples of the world are brothers!

8. The National General Assembly of the People of Cuba reaffirms its faith that Latin America soon will be marching, united and triumphant, free from the control that turns its economy over to North American imperialism and prevents its true voice from being heard at the meetings where domesticated Chancellors form an infamous chorus led by its despotic masters.

Therefore, it ratifies its decision of working for that common Latin American destiny that will enable our countries to build a true solidarity, based upon the free will of each of them and the joint aspirations of all. In the struggle for such a Latin America, in opposition to the obedient voices of those who usurp its official representation, there arises now, with invincible power, the genuine voice of the people, a voice that rises from the depths of its tin and coal mines, from its factories and sugar mills, from its feudal lands, where

rotos,¹ *cholos*,² *gauchos*,³ *ibaros*,⁴ heirs of Zapata and Sandino, grip the weapons of their freedom, a voice that resounds in its poets and novelists, in its students, in its women and children, in its vigilant old people.

To that voice of our brothers, the Assembly of the People of Cuba answers:

"Present!" Cuba shall not fall. Cuba is here today to ratify before Latin America and before the world, as a historical commitment, its irrevocable dilemma: *Patria* or Death!

9. The National General Assembly of the People of Cuba resolves that this declaration shall be known as "The Declaration of Havana."

CUBA

HAVANA, FREE TERRITORY OF AMERICA

September 2, 1960.

1. *roto*. A member of the exploited labor force of Peru. Generally of Indian and European blood.
2. *cholo*. A member of the exploited labor force of Chile. Generally of Indian and European blood.
3. *gaucho*. The cowboy of Argentina. The exploited class which forms the backbone of the cattle industry of that country.
4. *ibaro*. A member of the much exploited agricultural labor force of Puerto Rico.

The 26th of July Movement in the United States offers this Declaration in an attempt to achieve a better understanding of the Cuban Revolution on the part of intelligent Americans who were not given an opportunity to see it in their newspapers or magazines or who may be getting a biased view of what is occurring in Cuba from their normal channels of information.

The 26th of July Movement in the United States is a voluntary organization. All of its funds come from voluntary contributions of its friends and members in the United States. None of its officers or members receives any compensation for his or her services.

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